

# Montessori Model United Nations MMUN 2012



## *The United Nations Children's Fund* UNICEF

Dear Delegates,

It is a pleasure to welcome you to the 2012 Montessori Model UN and specifically to the United Nations Children's Fund, commonly referred to as the UNICEF. The following pages intend to guide you in the research of the topics that will be debated at MMUN 2012 in committee sessions. Please note - this guide only provides the basis for your investigation. It is your responsibility to find as much information necessary on both the topics - how they relate to the country you represent. Such information should help you write your Position Paper, where you need to cite the references in the text and finally list all references in the MLA format.

The MLA format may or may not be strictly adhered to in this Background Guide because the primary purpose is to provide you the initial launching pad to pursue your research on the two topics. The more information and understanding you acquire on the two topics, the more you will be able to influence the Resolution writing process – through debates [formal and informal caucuses], and the MMUN experience as a whole. Please feel free to contact me if and when you face challenges in your research or formatting your Position Papers.

We encourage you to learn all you can about your country first with regard to the two selected topics and both committee members need to be well versed in each topic.

Enjoy researching and writing your Position Papers. We look forward to seeing you in New York!

Wilma Kiefer  
President  
UNICEF  
Montessori Model UN  
[unicef@montessori-mun.org](mailto:unicef@montessori-mun.org)

## MONTESSORI MODEL UNITED NATIONS 2012



### **History:**

The United Nations Children's Fund was created by the United Nations General Assembly on December 11, 1946. It was originally established to provide emergency food and healthcare to the countries that had been devastated by World War II. In 1953, UNICEF became a permanent fixture in the United Nations system. Six years later, in 1959, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, which defined a child's right to protection, education, health care, shelter and good nutrition. UNICEF was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1965 "for the promotion of brotherhood among nations." The Convention of the Rights of the Child was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1989 and entered into force in September of 1990. It became the most widely - and rapidly accepted human rights treaty in history. In 1990, UNICEF held the World Summit for Children, a summit of Heads of State and Government at the United Nations in New York City that established 10-year goals for children's health, nutrition and education. A Special Session on Children of the UN General Assembly was convened to review progress since the World Summit for Children in 1990 and re-energize global commitment to children's rights. It was the first such Session devoted exclusively to children and the first to include them as official delegates. Originally named the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, UNICEF's name was shortened but the acronym UNICEF remained. UNICEF staff is present in over 190 countries and territories, has 200 country offices and seven regional offices that carry out the mission of UNICEF.

### **Purpose:**

The purpose of UNICEF is to provide developmental and humanitarian aid and assistance to children and mothers in developing nations. UNICEF works to uphold the Convention of the Rights of the Child and to establish a safe and secure life style for the children of the world.

*"We are part of the Global Movement for Children – a broad coalition dedicated to improving the life of every child. Through this movement, and events such as the United Nations Special Session on Children, we encourage young people to speak out and participate in the decisions that affect their lives. "*

**Mission Statement:**

- UNICEF is mandated by the United Nations General Assembly to advocate for the protection of children's rights, to help meet their basic needs and to expand their opportunities to reach their full potential.
- UNICEF is guided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child and strives to establish children's rights as enduring ethical principles and international standards of behavior toward children.
- UNICEF insists that the survival, protection and development of children are universal development imperatives that are integral to human progress.
- UNICEF mobilizes political will and material resources to help countries, particularly developing countries, ensure a "first call for children" and to build their capacity to form appropriate policies and deliver services for children and their families.
- UNICEF is committed to ensuring special protection for the most disadvantaged children - victims of war, disasters, extreme poverty, all forms of violence and exploitation and those with disabilities.
- UNICEF responds in emergencies to protect the rights of children. In coordination with United Nations partners and humanitarian agencies, UNICEF makes its unique facilities for rapid response available to its partners to relieve the suffering of children and those who provide their care.
- UNICEF is non-partisan and its cooperation is free of discrimination. In everything it does, the most disadvantaged children and the countries in greatest need have priority.
- UNICEF aims, through its country programs, to promote the equal rights of women and girls and to support their full participation in the political, social, and economic development of their communities.
- UNICEF works with all its partners towards the attainment of the sustainable human development goals adopted by the world community and the realization of the vision of peace and social progress enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

**Membership and Authority:**

UNICEF is run by a 36-member Executive Board that establishes policies, approves programs and oversees administrative and financial plans. The Executive Board of UNICEF is made up of government representatives who are elected for three-year terms by the United Nations Economic and Social Council. UNICEF is an inter-governmental organization and thus is accountable to the governments in countries where UNICEF carries out its mission. UNICEF's employee salary is based on the United Nations Common System. UNICEF is funded exclusively by voluntary contributions. Additionally, the National Committee collectively raises around one-third of UNICEF's annual income or operating budget. This income or operating budget funding comes through contributions from corporations, civil society organizations and more than 6 million individual donors worldwide. They also rally many different partners – including the media, national and local government officials, NGOs, specialists such as doctors and lawyers, corporations, schools, young people and the general public – on issues related to children's rights.

**Topic I: Declaration of the Rights of the Child:**  
**How is the “voice” of the child heard and represented in your country**



A key challenge facing the international community today includes the ability and manner in which nations execute and enforce the Declaration of the Rights of the Child. With the implementation of the Declaration of the Rights of the Child also comes the challenge of putting an end to the harm and danger being caused to the children of the World, especially those in developing nations.

**Introduction:**

Hundreds of thousands of children around the world are faced with the daily threats of hunger, disease, war, insufficient education and lack of safety. It is these threats that the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Child aims to defeat. The United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Child outlines a child's right to "*protection, education, health care, shelter and good nutrition*" and it is the aim of UNICEF, its supporters and the governments whom they aid, to protect the children of said nation and ensure that they are given the opportunity to live healthy and prosperous lives.

On September 2, 1990, the Declaration of the Rights of the Child became international law. The Convention on the Rights of the Child consists of 54 articles that address the basic human rights children everywhere are entitled too: the right to survival; to develop to the fullest; to protection from harmful influences, abuse and exploitation; and to participate fully in family, cultural and social life. The four core principles of the Convention are non-discrimination; devotion to the best interests of the child; the right to life, survival and development; and respect for the views of the child. The Convention on the Rights of the Child defined a child as "... every human being below the age of eighteen years unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier."

A key challenge facing the international community today includes the ability and manner in which nations execute and enforce the Declaration of the Rights of the Child.

With the implementation of the Declaration of the Rights of the Child also comes the challenge of putting an end to the harm and endangerment being caused to the children of the World, especially those in developing nations. Though their power is limited, it is the duty of UNICEF and the governments that they assist to make certain that the children within their borders are given the rights established to them through the Declaration of the Rights of the Child. Nations, collectively and individually, must now look at the problems that their nation is facing, such as war or a lack of food and water, to be able to assess the impact these issues have on their children and to work together to find solutions to address and improve or eliminate such problems.

### **Background:**

Since the establishment of UNICEF for the purpose of assisting the children affected by World War II, it has been their goal to work toward the bettering of life for children in all nations, especially those in negative situations. With unrest, conflict, political corruption and dismal economic standings plaguing many nations, children often are needed to take on the role of parent, care-giver, or income provider / worker. Every child should be allowed access to education, nutrition and a healthy childhood; yet, this is not the case. The problems of child soldiers, sex trafficking, labor trafficking and underage workers are present in many developed and developing nations and negatively affect the global community as a whole. If the children of our global communities are not supported and cared for, what is hope for their future.

By adopting the Declaration of the Rights of the Child as international law, the United Nations began taking steps to ensure that every child was given the childhood they deserved. It was then left to each nation to uphold the Declaration of the Rights of the Child and to make the children, their citizens and future leaders, a top priority and work toward eradicating the mistreatment of children.

### **Possible Solutions:**

The United Nations enforced their views of children's rights by declaring the Declaration of the Rights of the Child as international law; yet nations did not always abide by the guidelines and regulations set forth within the declaration. Nations must look within their borders and acknowledge the problems affecting their youth and take steps within their governments to ensure that these problems will be fixed.. Above all, the problems must be acknowledged for a solution to be found. Once acknowledged, nations can then take steps to create new laws or strengthen existing laws in order to allow for the safety of their children. Nations in need of assistance must look to those nations willing to give aid and to work together to establish a safe environment for said nation's children. Those nations willing to give assistance must establish what kind of aid or assistance they are able to provide. The governments and families of these children are responsible for their well-being and must work toward short and long-term solutions that can yield positive, long term affects.

**Research Questions:**

1. What laws/regulations does your country have in regards to the rights of children?
  - a. How are these laws upheld?
  - b. What strategies/solutions have been attempted to maintain these laws?
2. How does your country empower children to speak out?
3. Is there conflict between national, local, or parental rights with those of the individual child?
4. Who represents the children in legal situations?
5. Who represents or advocates for them if they do not have parents or do not wish to have their parents advocate for them?
6. What governmental or non-governmental agencies or safety nets exist in your communities/country?
7. What has worked? Why?
8. What has not worked? Why?
9. What could be improved? Why?
10. What past problems has your nation had with this issue?
11. How this problem has/is affecting your country/ neighboring countries/ continent/ world?
12. If this issue is not a problem in your country, then how can they be involved? Why and why not?
13. What and how can children like you be involved in the prevention and occurrences of the issue?
14. What are some facts, figures, statistics regarding the issue – national, regional, international?

**Summary:**

It is the goal of UNICEF and the United Nations to maintain the safety and livelihood of the children of the world and ensure that the Declaration of the Rights of the Child is upheld by all nations. Nations must look toward short-term solutions that can be evolved into long term solutions for each country, region and world as a whole. Each child in this world is a member of a larger community, a community that should have their best interests in mind regardless of gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity or social/political/economic standing.

Nations must first look within their borders and assess what needs to be done for their nation's well being as well as the region they are a part of. Nations able to give aid and support should look to see how much they are able to help; likewise, nations in need of help must establish how much aid they need to ensure the safety and prosperity of their children.

**Reading/Research References:**

1. [www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org)
2. [www.un.org](http://www.un.org)
3. [www.cia.gov/library/publication/the-world-factbook](http://www.cia.gov/library/publication/the-world-factbook)
4. [www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/humanrights/resources/plainchild.asp](http://www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/humanrights/resources/plainchild.asp)  
(ONLINE VERSION)
5. [www.unicef.org/lac/spbarbados/Legal/global/General/declaration\\_child1950.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/lac/spbarbados/Legal/global/General/declaration_child1950.pdf)  
(PDF VERSION)
6. <http://www.ohchr.org/english/law/crc/htm>

## **Topic II: Protection of Street Children and their Re-integration into Society**



### **Introduction:**

Street children are found in most parts of the world. They live on the streets, sleep in empty buildings and spend most of their time wandering around or struggling to survive. They are visible at times; but, in general, street children remain invisible to the public eye. Exactly how many street children are out there is uncertain.<sup>1</sup> Though physically visible at times, they are often ignored, shunned and excluded in a community.<sup>2</sup> As highlighted by UNICEF's annual State of the World's Children reports, street children are recognized globally as one of the most vulnerable groups of people around the world. Consequently, they are often subjected to a high risk of violence.<sup>3</sup> The definition of street children has generated much discussion as it covers children in "such wide variety of circumstances and characteristics that policy-makers and service providers find it difficult to describe and target them."<sup>4</sup>

However, it is widely accepted that street children can be defined as

"any girl or boy who has not reached adulthood, for whom the street (in the broadest sense of the word, including unoccupied dwellings, wasteland, etc.) has become her or his habitual abode and/or sources of livelihood, and who is inadequately protected, supervised or directed by responsible adults"<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Identification of the street children - <http://www.fafu.no/pub/rapp/474/474.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> The State of the World's Children 2006: Excluded and Invisible -

[http://www.unicef.org/sowc06/pdfs/sowc06\\_fullreport.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/sowc06/pdfs/sowc06_fullreport.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> State of the World's Street Children Report: Violence - [www.crin.org/docs/street.pdf](http://www.crin.org/docs/street.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> State of the World's Street Children Report: Violence

<sup>5</sup> Identification of the street children

Whereas this definition is accepted worldwide, the concept of street children is divided into sub-groups to identify key issues faced by each of the sub groups.

UNICEF makes distinctions between two sub categories of street children, namely those “on the streets” and those “of the streets.”<sup>6</sup> Children on streets earn their living or beg for money on the street and return home at night. They maintain contact with their families and are likely to hand over all or part of their earnings to the family, thus contributing to the economic survival of the family unit. Their parents may even encourage these children to go on the street to “work.”<sup>7</sup> On the other hand, children of the streets are homeless children who live and sleep on the streets in urban area. They are totally on their own, living and surviving with other street children or homeless adults. For them, there may still be family ties but they are “tenuous and maintained occasionally.”<sup>8</sup>

This distinction highlights a very important differentiating factor – children on the streets have families and homes to go to at night in contrast, children of the streets live on the street and lack parental, emotional and psychological support normally found in parenting situation<sup>9</sup>.

While the distinctions remain useful in identifying the two sub groups within the street children, many gray areas and overlaps occur. Some children of the streets are abandoned and rejected by their families while other may choose to leave due to prevailing circumstances. Some children of the streets maintained ties with their families while others have totally severed their family connections. On the other hand, children on the streets may be staying with distant relatives or their employer; very often, children on the streets live in poor households and are at a high risk of becoming children of the streets. Thus, one should keep in mind the intricacies and complexities of the problem that lies beneath this simple classification.

### **Background:**

Globally, street children are among the most visible of all children living and working in urban area all over the world. Yet, paradoxically, they are also among the most invisible and vulnerable of all groups of people. They are the hardest group or sub culture of people to reach with vital services such as healthcare and education, as well as being the most difficult group of people to protect as a part of civil society.<sup>10</sup>

The exact number of street children around the world is impossible to fathom but the figure, as estimated by UNICEF, runs into the tens of millions across the world.<sup>11</sup> The most common cited number, from UNICEF’s 1989 estimation, puts the number of

---

<sup>6</sup> A Study on Street Children of Zimbabwe - [http://www.unicef.org/evaldatabase/files/ZIM\\_01-805.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/evaldatabase/files/ZIM_01-805.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Identification of the street children

<sup>8</sup> Identification of the street children

<sup>9</sup> A Study on Street Children of Zimbabwe

<sup>10</sup> The State of the World’s Children 2006: Excluded and Invisible

<sup>11</sup> The State of the World’s Children 2006: Excluded and Invisible

street children worldwide to be at about 100 million.<sup>12</sup> However, this number has no basis in fact.<sup>13</sup>

Similarly, it is debatable whether the number of street children is growing globally or whether it is the awareness of street children within the society, which has grown.<sup>14</sup> Either way, it is an indisputable fact that street children are common everywhere and this not limited to the poorest cities. – Street children are found even in the biggest and the richest cities of the industrialized world.<sup>15 16</sup>

While there are understandable pressures for policies to be informed by aggregate numbers, estimates of street child populations, even at city levels, are often hotly disputed and can distract rather than inform policy makers.<sup>17</sup>

Children and youth become street children for a plethora of reasons, which include war, poverty, urbanization, political instability, natural disasters, family breakdown, AIDS, rebellion against their family, insufficient income, physical and emotional violence as well as sexual abuse.<sup>18</sup>

These people are also likely to become victims of violence, sexual exploitation, neglect, substance abuse and addiction, and human rights violation.<sup>19</sup> Street children often find themselves in conflict with the police and authorities and have been rounded up, driven outside city limits and left there. Some were even murdered by vigilantes in the name of cleaning up the city, often with the complicity or disregard of local authorities.<sup>20</sup> Street girls are also vulnerable to an additional form of violence when compared to boys. Girls are more likely (although not exclusively) to be subjected to sexual violence, often with limited access to preventative measures and other health services.<sup>21</sup> Up to 90% of street children use psychoactive substances, such as medicines, alcohols, cigarettes, heroin, cannabis and readily available industrial products such as shoe or cobblers' glue and paint thinner as an escape from reality.<sup>22</sup> As a result of these actions or behaviors, street children face significant health threats to their well-being.

In some regions of the world, in order to survive, those with family links may earn their living by selling trinkets, shining shoes, begging, working as a child laborer or washing cars.<sup>23</sup> Those with no other means of income may resort to thieving or

<sup>12</sup> State of the World's Street Children Report: Violence

<sup>13</sup> State of the World's Street Children Report: Violence

<sup>14</sup> State of the World's Street Children Report: Violence

<sup>15</sup> State of the World's Street Children Report: Violence

<sup>16</sup> Street Children Statistics -

[http://www.streetchildren.org.uk/uploads/resources/Street\\_Children\\_Stats\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.streetchildren.org.uk/uploads/resources/Street_Children_Stats_FINAL.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> State of the World's Street Children Report: Violence

<sup>18</sup> Canadian International Development Agency: Street Children - <http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/acdi-cida/acdi-cida.nsf/eng/REN-218125542-Q3B>

<sup>19</sup> Canadian International Development Agency: Street Children

<sup>20</sup> The State of the World's Children 2006: Excluded and Invisible

<sup>21</sup> State of the World's Street Children Report: Violence

<sup>22</sup> Canadian International Development Agency: Street Children

<sup>23</sup> Canadian International Development Agency: Street Children

prostitution for survival. These people or children are extremely vulnerable to sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS.<sup>24</sup>

### Possible Solutions:

Reintegration of street children is one of the key components in alleviating this global problem. However, in doing so, other factors such as recovery from physical and mental abuse, breaking criminal habits, healthcare, and substance rehabilitation must be taken into account as reintegration is a multifaceted issue.<sup>25</sup> For instance, many children who have taken part in a reintegration program in Mali and Ghana often fail. For many they return to the streets within a few months.<sup>26</sup> This indicates that there is a need to establish customized programs with sufficient understanding of the various aspects of the challenges street children are facing. These challenges need to be addressed in order to find long term responses to the obstacles to reintegration into society that street children encounter.<sup>27</sup>

Some of the past efforts are as follows;

- UNICEF Resolution A/63/426<sup>28</sup>
- Commission on Human Rights – Resolution 1993/81<sup>29</sup>
- Commission on Human Rights – Resolution 1994/93<sup>30</sup>
- Key resolution: UN General Assembly – Resolution A/RES/49/212<sup>31</sup>
- Convention on the Rights of Child<sup>32</sup>

Though UN resolutions have been passed that call for protection for street children's rights, the implementation of it lies with UNICEF, CRC and the organizations they work with. UNICEF also recently prepared a new institutional strategy to work with the Consortium for Street Children, CSC: a worldwide network of 55 organizations aimed to protect street children and promote their rights.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Canadian International Development Agency: Street Children

<sup>25</sup> Street Children: Promising Practices and Approaches -

<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/WBI/Resources/wbi37196.pdf>

<sup>26</sup> Identification of the street children

<sup>27</sup> Identification of the street children

<sup>28</sup> <http://daccess-dds->

[ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N08/636/13/PDF/N0863613.pdf?OpenElement](http://www.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N08/636/13/PDF/N0863613.pdf?OpenElement)

<sup>29</sup> [http://www.unhchr.ch/huridocda/huridoca.nsf/\(Symbol\)/E.CN.4.RES.1993.81.En?Opendocument](http://www.unhchr.ch/huridocda/huridoca.nsf/(Symbol)/E.CN.4.RES.1993.81.En?Opendocument)

<sup>30</sup> [http://www.unhchr.ch/huridocda/huridoca.nsf/\(Symbol\)/E.CN.4.RES.1994.93.En?Opendocument](http://www.unhchr.ch/huridocda/huridoca.nsf/(Symbol)/E.CN.4.RES.1994.93.En?Opendocument)

<sup>31</sup> <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/49/a49r212.htm>

<sup>32</sup> <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/crc.htm>

<sup>33</sup> [http://www.streetchildren.org.uk/uploads/downloads/DfID\\_Consultation\\_on\\_Institutional\\_Strategy\\_UNICEF\\_CSC\\_response\\_Jan\\_09.pdf](http://www.streetchildren.org.uk/uploads/downloads/DfID_Consultation_on_Institutional_Strategy_UNICEF_CSC_response_Jan_09.pdf)

Aside from that, UNICEF has also taken on or adopted grassroots initiatives in helping street children around the world, such as in Uganda<sup>34</sup>, Georgia<sup>35</sup>, Ethiopia<sup>36</sup>, Egypt<sup>37</sup> and other countries.

**Research Questions:**

- 1) As a UNICEF member state, how would you work with CSC in alleviating the street children situation and challenge?
- 2) In its report, CSC proposed 6 central recommendations<sup>38</sup>. What would your country do about these recommendations?
- 3) How do you move UNICEF forward to collaborate internationally to solve this problem?
- 4) Some of the countries may refuse to acknowledge street children and act to “purge” them from the street by murdering these street children<sup>39</sup>. How would UNICEF address this problem? What about countries who decidedly “solve” street children problem by incarcerating them and putting them in jail? Or, what would your country do about rehabilitation that treats street children harshly?<sup>40</sup>
- 5) What is considered to be an effective reintegration strategy? How do we ensure that these street children will not run away from a reintegration program while at the same time not violate their individual human rights?
- 6) What are some facts, figures, statistics regarding the issue – national, regional, international?

**Reading/Research References:**

- The State of the World’s Children 2006: Excluded and Invisible - [http://www.unicef.org/sowc06/pdfs/sowc06\\_fullreport.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/sowc06/pdfs/sowc06_fullreport.pdf)
- State of the World’s Street Children Report: Violence - [www.crin.org/docs/street.pdf](http://www.crin.org/docs/street.pdf)
- Street Children Statistics - [http://www.streetchildren.org.uk/uploads/resources/Street\\_Children\\_Stats\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.streetchildren.org.uk/uploads/resources/Street_Children_Stats_FINAL.pdf)
- Street Children: Promising Practices and Approaches - <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/WBI/Resources/wbi37196.pdf>
- <http://www.streetchildren.org.uk/>
- Working with Street Children – Reintegration through Education - [http://www.barbara-brink.com/sc\\_supp\\_learning\\_s.pdf](http://www.barbara-brink.com/sc_supp_learning_s.pdf)

<sup>34</sup> [http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/uganda\\_58936.html](http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/uganda_58936.html)

<sup>35</sup> [http://www.unicef.org/georgia/reallives\\_4665.html](http://www.unicef.org/georgia/reallives_4665.html)

<sup>36</sup> [http://www.unicef.org/ethiopia/ET\\_media\\_child\\_protection.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/ethiopia/ET_media_child_protection.pdf)

<sup>37</sup> [http://www.unicef.org/sowc/egypt\\_30616.html](http://www.unicef.org/sowc/egypt_30616.html)

<sup>38</sup> State of the World’s Street Children Report: Violence

<sup>39</sup> [http://www.pangaea.org/street\\_children/latin/colombia.htm](http://www.pangaea.org/street_children/latin/colombia.htm)

<sup>40</sup> <http://www.cdi.org/russia/johnson/6032-7.cfm>